

Listing of the Claims:

The following is a complete listing of all the claims in the application, with an indication of the status of each:

1. (Currently amended) Method for the generation of chondrons comprising the step of:
cultivation of ~~cells~~ chondrocytes at unphysiologically high extracellular concentrations of magnesium (Mg), wherein said unphysiologically high extracellular concentrations of Mg range up to 20 mM, and characterized in that at least once ~~the~~ a first unphysiologically high extracellular Mg concentration is increased to a second unphysiologically high extracellular Mg concentration during cell cultivation which promotes proliferating chondrocytes to form chondrons.
2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said magnesium is a solution of magnesium sulphate or magnesium chloride.
3. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said extracellular concentrations of said magnesium solution range from about 12 mMol to about 65 mMol.
4. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the cultivation of the ~~cells~~ chondrocytes is further affected in the presence of fetal ~~foetal~~ calf serum (FCS) or mammalian serum.
5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the cultivation of the ~~cells~~ chondrocytes is further affected in the presence of at least one growth factor and/or cytokine and/or hormone.
6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said chondrocytes are isolated from tissue of a mammal ~~are cultivated.~~
7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said chondrocytes are differentiated from chondrocyte precursor cells and/or from mesenchymal stem cells and/or embryonic stem cells and/or adult stem cells ~~are cultivated.~~

8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 7 wherein the chondrocytes are of mammal origin.
9. (Original) The method according to claim 8, wherein the chondrocytes are of human origin.
10. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~cells~~ chondrocytes are seeded into tissue culture flasks and are cultivated in monolayer culture with medium supplemented with FCS and concentration of magnesium is initially in the range of 11 to 25 mMol.
11. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 6, wherein when increasing the Mg concentration the cells are embedded in alginate and cultured in medium supplemented with serum from said mammal, ~~the concentration of magnesium is increased to a range of 21 to 65 mMol.~~
12. (Original) The method according to claim 11 wherein the cultivation is effected under an oxygen partial pressure of 8%.
13. (Canceled)
14. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein cultivation is performed in vitro.
- 15-17. (Canceled)
18. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6, wherein the chondrocytes are of human origin.
- 19-20. (Canceled)
21. (New) The method according to claim 8, wherein when increasing the Mg concentration the cells are embedded in alginate and cultured in medium supplemented with serum from said mammal.